

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Executive Office of the Mayor

Office of Communications



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE Thursday, February 9, 2012

CONTACT: Doxie McCoy (EOM) 202.727.9691; doxie.mccoy@dc.gov
Eshauna Smith (Office of the Deputy Mayor for Education) 202.422.9579;
eshauna.smith@dc.gov

Mayor Gray Announces New Ad Campaign Promoting School Attendance

Five District Students to Serve as Faces of Anti-Truancy Campaign

(WASHINGTON, D.C.) – Mayor Vincent C. Gray and Deputy Mayor for Education De’Shawn Wright today unveiled a new citywide ad campaign that reinforces the link between consistent school attendance and academic and career success. Research shows that missing even one day of school every few weeks can prevent a student from graduating on time.

“Improving education and providing early lessons in career preparedness were two of my key campaign priorities – and preventing truancy does both,” Mayor Gray said. ***“Studies show that consistent school attendance is a significant factor in determining whether a student has a successful future. This ad campaign will start a much-needed conversation about truancy and school attendance around the dinner table, in houses of worship, at the barbershop and in other places in our community.”***

School figures show that 20 percent of D.C. students miss 15 days of school or more annually, Deputy Mayor for Health and Human Services Beatriz “BB” Otero noted. “We want to show these students that we care about their future, and we are directing our resources toward identifying and addressing the many contributing factors that often impede a student’s ability to attend school regularly and developing strategies that support the student and his or her family,” she said.

The campaign’s theme, *The More You Learn, The More You Earn*, features the motivational stories of five District students who, in some cases, reversed failing grades and chronic truancy to become on-track students. Anacostia High School is hosting the campaign kick-off.

Aimed at parents and middle-school and high-school students, the new campaign includes radio commercials, transit ads, posters and other educational materials. They will be distributed to schools,

libraries, local businesses and other community-based organizations, and are available in English and Spanish.

Additionally, the campaign includes a social-media component that will reinforce its key messages through Facebook, Twitter and text-messaging platforms.

Deputy Mayor Wright added, “We know that young people are often influenced by their peers. *The More You Learn, The More You Earn* profiles resilient teens who persevered in spite of negative pressures and were able to make important adjustments. I am proud to be a part of helping to tell their stories.”

The More You Learn, The More You Earn was spearheaded by the District’s Truancy Task Force, a multi-agency collaboration that includes representatives from various agencies and community partners. It is convened by the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Education, D.C. Superior Court, D.C. Public Schools, the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Health and Human Services, D.C. Child and Family Services Agency and the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council.

“We are truly excited about the opportunity that this campaign presents to educate our students and families about the importance of going to school every day,” said Mannone Butler, Executive Director of the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council.

For more information about *The More You Learn, The More You Earn*, visit www.dc.gov/stayinschool.

Students featured in campaign ad are:

Anacostia High School

De’Andre Horne, 12th grade

Ballou High School

Acey Calhoun, 10th grade

Sasha Sauls, 12th grade

Cardozo High School

Rebeca Lara, 12th grade

Paul Public Charter School

Ti’Ara Hairston, 9th grade

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